

REMARKS

Claims 14-22 and 24-27 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 14-22 and 24-26 are amended, claim 27 is added, and claims 23 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. No new matter is added by these amendments. Reconsideration based on the amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

I. Objection to the Drawings

The Office Action objects to the drawings for failing to show every feature of the invention specified in the claims. Specifically, the Office Action asserts that the drawings fail to show features associated with the pressure transducer as first recited in line 2 of claim 17 and features of two hydraulic units and an electric motor associated with the hydraulic units as recited in lines 2-3 of claim 14, and the gap seal recited in the last line of claim 24. This objection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that page 8, line 6 and page 10, line 17 of the specification describes load cells that correspond to the pressure transducer. The load cell 40 is shown at, for example, Figs. 2 and 4. The hydraulic unit has reference signs 22 and 24 in Figure 2 and are described on page 6, line 16. The electric motor has reference sign 26 in Figure 2 and is described on page 6, line 17. The gap seal has reference signs 82 and 48 in Figure 4 and is described on page 14, line 34 of the description. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the objections to the drawings is without basis.

Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

II. §112 Rejections

The Office Action rejects claims 14-22 and 24-26 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants respectfully submit that the claims as amended and the above remarks obviate the rejection. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

III. The Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 14-16, 19, 20 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP-2001-241403 (JP 403) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,575,076 (Achten). The Office Action rejects claim 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 403 in view of Achten and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,216,456 (Mitchell). The Office Action rejects claim 18 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 403 in view of Achten and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,810,125 (Gezari). The Office Action rejects claim 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 403 in view of Achten and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,988,330 (Morris). The Office Action rejects claims 24-26 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over JP 403 in view of Achten and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,706,919 (Kruckemeyer). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

The Office Action asserts that JP 403 teaches, either alone or in combination, a damping device as presently claimed. However, Applicants respectfully submit that JP 403 differs from the present application. Specifically, JP 403 discloses a damping device in which the hydraulic unit connects the tank with the cylindrical chamber. The hydraulic unit P1 connects the piston rod-side ring chamber with a cylinder chamber. Because hydraulic unit P2 is connected in this manner, one of the many advantages afforded by the presently claimed combination of features, as specified in the last passage of page 2 and the first passage of page 3 of the present application, cannot be performed. The hydraulic units cannot be supported against each another in a quasi-static condition. Moreover, JP 403 discloses a motor used to drive the hydraulic units P1 and P2. Accordingly, JP 403 cannot teach or suggest to one of ordinary skill in the art the claimed combination of features and the advantages associated therewith.

With regard to Achten, Applicants respectfully submit that merely introducing the hydraulic accumulator of Achten at a random location in the hydraulic circuit does not result in advantages accommodated by the presently claimed combination of features. Accordingly, JP 403, either alone or in combination with Achten and/or the other asserted references, fails to teach or suggest the presently claimed combination of features.

Withdrawal of the rejections is respectfully requested.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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